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Guide To Statistics Canada Data On Families



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GUIDE TO STATISTICS CANADA DATA ON FAMILIES

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I. INTRODUCTION

Family data are available from a variety of sources in Statistics Canada. Since each survey is designed to address specific data requirements, there are important conceptual, definitional and operational differences between family data derived from the various sources. Furthermore, since different surveys may exclude different specific populations, the universe covered may vary between surveys. As a result, family data shown in various Statistics Canada publications may not be exactly comparable. Users who are not very familiar with the differences may find it either difficult to select the most suitable data set, or confusing to compare figures from two or more sources.

The purpose of this Guide is to document the definitions of "family" as employed in the surveys, and to show the differences and comparability of data sets. While the discussion dwells mainly on current definitions, historical comparability is also reviewed for the benefit of users who employ data for longitudinal analyses. Detailed descriptions of data collection and processing algorithms are omitted; but references to processing differences that affect data comparability will be made.

II. SOURCES OF DATA

Data on the family are available from the following sources:

SURVEY	PUBLICATION	FREQUENCY
Census	Various products	quinquennial
Labour Force Survey	<u>The Labour Force</u> (Cat. 71-001)	monthly
	<u>Family Characteristics and Labour Force Activity: Annual Averages, 1977-1984</u> (Cat. 71-533)	occasional
Survey of Family Expenditures	<u>Family Expenditure in Canada</u> (Cat. 62-555)	biennial
Food Expenditure Survey	<u>Family Food Expenditure in Canada</u> (Cat. 62-554)	biennial
Survey of Consumer Finances	<u>Income Distributions by Size in Canada</u> (Cat. 13-207)	annual
	<u>Income After Tax, Distributions by Size in Canada</u> (Cat. 13-210)	annual
	<u>Family Incomes, Census Families</u> (Cat. 13-208)	annual
	<u>Earnings of Men and Women</u> (Cat. 13-217)	annual

Some unpublished data are available upon request from the above surveys. Data from earlier surveys are published under various titles and catalogue numbers.

In addition, the Household and Family Projections, Canada, Provinces and Territories (Cat. 91-522), published occasionally, shows family projections based upon Census and other data. Estimates of families are published annually in Postcensal Estimates of Families, Canada, Provinces and Territories (Cat. 91-204) and occasionally in Intercensal Estimates of Families, Canada and Provinces (Cat. 91-529).

III. CONCEPTS AND DEFINITIONS

The concepts of private household and family

All the previously mentioned surveys share a common definition of a private household, which is, a person or a group of persons living in the same dwelling. The dwelling cannot be of a collective or institutional nature, e.g. a hotel, or a hospital. A household may be made up of one or more families, or it may be made up of a person living alone, or a group of unrelated individuals.

A family comprises of two or more persons related to one another by blood, marriage or adoption. The presence of families in households is determined by detailed processing of the information on age, sex, marital status, and the relationships between household members.

It is important to distinguish between households and families because they differ conceptually as well as numerically. The conceptual difference lies in the relationships of household members. If household membership consists only of unrelated persons, then no family exists and the household is usually referred to as a non-family household.

It is slightly more complicated in cases where all or some household members are related by blood, marriage or adoption. In most cases, families are identified in such households (depending on the definition of family which is discussed below) and the household is classified as a family household.

The majority of family households in Canada are one-family households. There are, however, multiple-family households where two or more families live in the same dwelling. Thus, even among family households, there is no one-to-one correspondence in the counts of families and households.

As the focus of this Guide is family data, the discussion in the following will dwell on family characteristics.

Family - based on relationships among household members

Most of the family data from Statistics Canada are based upon two basic concepts of "family": the "nuclear" family and the "extended" family.

"Nuclear" family and census family

The nuclear family consists of a married couple, or a married couple with their sons/daughters, or one parent with offspring. The basic relationships among members of a nuclear family are those of husband-wife, and parent-child. Other terms that refer to the same grouping of kin relationships are the biological family, the conjugal family and the immediate family.

In statistical terms, the census family is akin to the concept of the nuclear family. The definition of a census family is: a husband and a wife (with or without children who have never married, regardless of age), or a lone parent of any marital status, with one or more children who have never married, regardless of age, living in the same dwelling.

This definition of the census family restricts the relationships among co-residing family members to those of husband-wife/common-law partners, and parent/never-married child(ren). No other related persons (e.g. a divorced son/daughter or a widowed parent) are considered part of the census family, even when they actually live in the same dwelling.

"Extended" family and economic family

The concept of "extended family" denotes a group of persons related to one another through parent-child or sibling ties. An extended family may comprise one or more nuclear families (of the same or different generation), or a conjugal family with one or more relatives other than offspring.

In terms of available family data, the economic family is a close approximation of the extended family. By definition, an economic family is a group of two or more persons who live in the same dwelling and are related to each other by blood, marriage or adoption.

This is a less restrictive definition of the family than the census family in that membership may include ever-married children, brothers and sisters, in-laws, and/or other relatives who reside in the same dwelling.

The following examples illustrate the differences between the census family and the economic family. All examples assume that the group of people live in the same dwelling. The criteria for determining the "head" in the surveys is discussed in Section V. Classification. In the Census, the term "head of household" has been replaced by the term "Person 1" since 1981.

EXAMPLE 1

Household A	Household B
Head/Person 1	Head/Person 1
Spouse	Spouse
Son (never married)	
Daughter (never married)	

By definition, both households A and B are census families, since membership consists of a husband and a wife (head/ person 1 and spouse) with never-married children (A), or husband-wife without children (B). These households are also economic families since everyone is related by blood (parents-children) and marriage (husband-wife).

EXAMPLE 2

Household A	Household B	Household C
Head/Person 1	Head/Person 1	Head/Person 1
Spouse	Spouse	Daughter
Son (divorced)	Widowed mother	(separated) of spouse

In this example, the husband and the wife in households A and B form a census family; but the divorced son in household A and the widowed mother of the spouse in household B are not part of the census family in their respective households. There is no census family in household C because the daughter is separated, and in spite of her blood relation to her parent, she is not a never-married child living with a parent.

All three households are economic families, and every person in each household is a member of his/her economic family by virtue of their relationship by blood and marriage. Unlike the more restrictive "never-married child(ren)" criterion used in the definition of the census family, the marital status of the son in (A) and of the daughter in household C does not exclude them from being members of the economic family in households A and C, since they are related to their respective parents by blood. Similarly, the widowed mother in household B is related to her daughter by blood, and therefore is a

member of the economic family in that household.

The above examples also demonstrate how the differences in definition can translate into differences in the counts of the number of families and persons in families according to the composition of the households. In Example 1, the counts of census families and economic families are the same. In Example 2, however, there are two census families (one in household A and one in household B) and three economic families (one in each of households A, B and C); and four persons in census families (A and B) as opposed to eight persons in economic families (total persons of households A, B and C).

In general, a census family is also an economic family or part of an economic family; but an economic family may not be a census family. The same can be said of persons in census families and economic families. There are usually more economic families and persons in economic families identified in households than census families and persons in census families; but the relationship is complex. There are economic families with no census families (as in household C of Example 2 above). On the other hand, when there are two or more related families in a household, there is one economic family but two or more census families. Figure 1 on the following page illustrates the relationship between census and economic families.

Family and unattached individuals based on the spending unit concept

This concept of the family is employed in the Survey of Family Expenditure. A spending unit is a group of people living in the same dwelling who depend on a common or pooled income for major expenses or one financially independent individual living alone. Never-married sons or daughters living with their parents are always considered as part of their parents' spending unit.

In the surveys, the spending unit is reconstructed as it existed during the reference period of the survey. For the Survey of Family Expenditures, data are obtained by recall for the previous calendar year, and the spending unit must then be reconstructed as it existed in that calendar year. For the Food Expenditure Survey, the reference period is two weeks before the survey.

The rules used to reconstruct the spending unit have several consequences. First, some spending units include part-year and full-year members. Second, some spending units include only part-year members (that is, they are part-year spending units). Third, some survey

records are formed by merging records of people who formed separate spending units for part of the year.

The spending unit definition of families and unattached individuals does not correspond to family definitions used by other Statistics Canada surveys. However, in most cases the members of spending units with two or more members are related and are thus consistent with the "economic family" definition employed by a number of Statistics Canada household surveys.

Summary of concepts and definitions

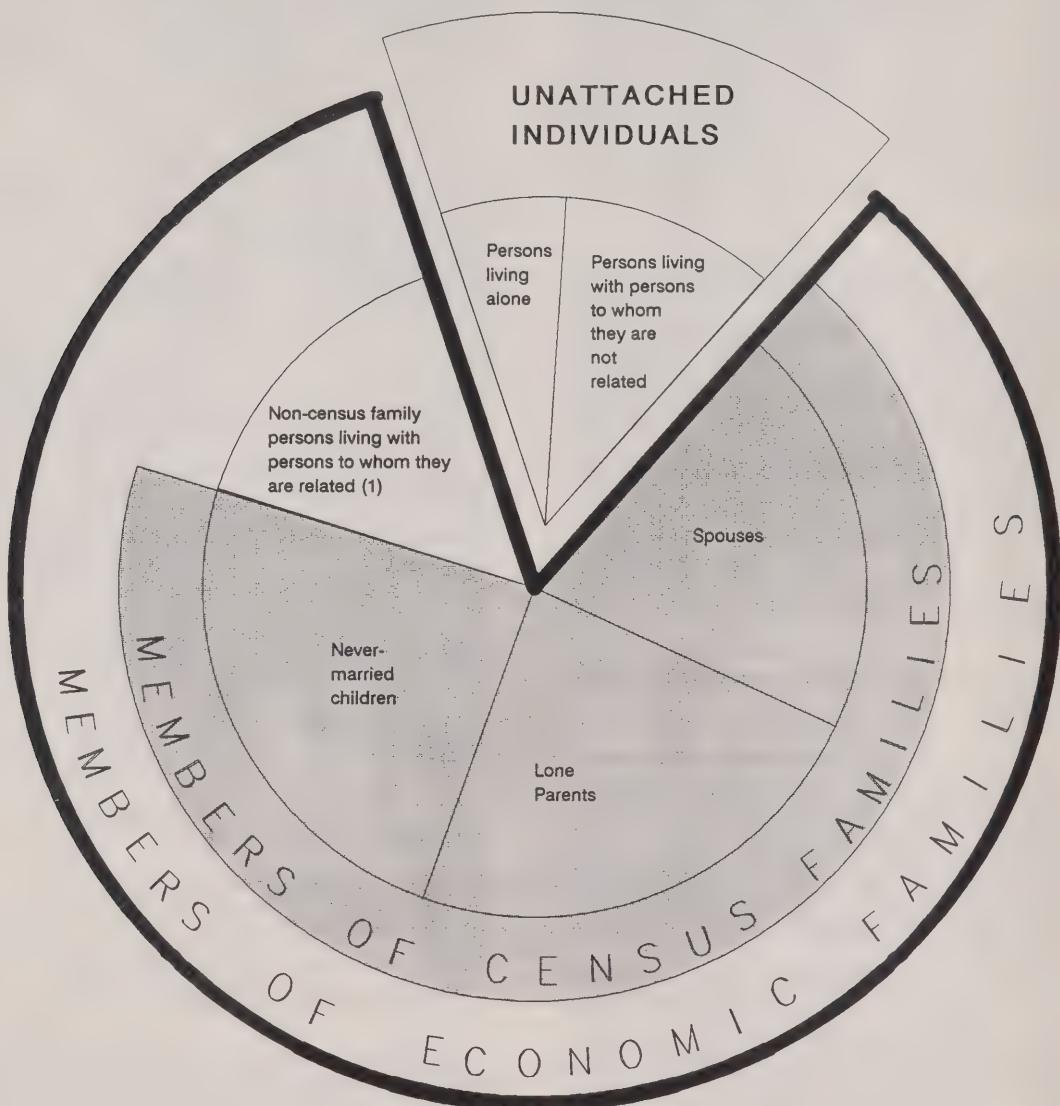
The definitions used in different surveys and data products are summarized below.

<u>Survey/Product</u>	<u>Definition Used</u>
Census	Both census and economic family definitions are used. For the most part, published data are for census families.
Labour Force Survey	Economic family
Survey of Consumer Finances	Economic family; but data for census families are published in Cat. 13-208.
Survey of Family Expenditure	Spending unit
Food Expenditure Survey	Spending unit
Household & Family Projections	Census family
Postcensal and Intercensal Estimates of Families	Census family

Definitions and data processing

Although the definitions of either the census family or the economic family appear to be identical in the Census and the Survey of Consumer Finances, there are differences in data processing that result in counts that are not exactly comparable. In general, data processing requirements, in line with the definitions, are more stringent for census families than for economic families. In consequence, figures for census families are more affected by processing considerations than those for economic families.

Figure 1. Relationship between unattached individuals and persons living in census families and economic families in private households



(1) Relationships between economic family but non-census family persons may include: grandparent/grandchild; parent/ever-married child; sibling/sibling; in-law/in-law; aunt or uncle/nephew or niece.

The main difference in data processing lies in the classification of children. In Census, children include only natural, adopted and step-children who have never married, regardless of age and are living in the same dwelling as their parent(s). In the Survey of Consumer Finances, children include not only natural, adopted and step-children who have never married, but also foster children (if under 18 years and never married), brothers or sisters (of the head) if they are under 15 years and never married, and never-married grandchildren under 21 years (with no parents present) who are living with their grandparent(s). More technical notes on data processing appear in Appendix B.

As a result of the difference in classifying children, the counts of lone-parent families, and the characteristics of census families (e.g. family size) from the Census are not comparable to those published by the Survey of Consumer Finances.

100% and weighted sample counts in the Census

The objective of the Census is to enumerate every household in Canada. However, while all households answered a number of basic questions, a random sample of households was asked to supply additional information. Data based upon (or derived from) the basic questions applicable to the entire population constitute the "100% counts". The additional information gathered from the random sample of households is inflated to the level of the total population (or "100% counts") by means of weights assigned to each person and household in the sample. These estimates are the weighted sample counts.

The weighting method used in the Census aims at minimizing the standard error of the estimates as well as the inconsistency between total population and weighted sampled counts over certain small geographical areas and for important subgroups of the population. Nevertheless, the weighted sample data are still subject to sampling and weighting errors. As a result, variations may exist between the 100% and weighted sample counts.

IV. UNIVERSES

By universe is meant the population to which family data apply. Stated differently, this refers to the coverage of the surveys.

Census

The objective of the Census is to enumerate every household in Canada. Family data from the Census are

published for families in private households¹ enumerated in Canada only; and do not apply to collective households² except Hutterite colonies.

Labour Force Survey

Data from the Labour Force Survey are obtained through a sample survey of households. The sample used has been designed to represent all persons in the population 15 years and over residing in Canada, with the exception of the following: residents of the Yukon and the Northwest Territories, persons living on Indian reserves, institutional residents and full-time members of the armed forces.

Survey of Consumer Finances

The survey sample is drawn from two-thirds of the Labour Force Survey sample.

Survey of Family Expenditure

The survey utilizes the Labour Force Survey sample design and frame. Up to 1976, and again in 1984, data were collected for private households in major urban centres. The surveys of 1978, 1982 and 1986 were national in coverage, and included Whitehorse and Yellowknife.

Family Food Expenditure Survey

The 1969, 1976 and 1984 surveys were national in coverage. The other surveys conducted in other years covered selected cities only.

Household and Family Projections

Canada, provinces and territories

Intercensal Estimates of Families

Canada and provinces

Postcensal Estimates of Families

Canada and provinces

¹ Refers to a person or group of persons (other than foreign residents) who occupy a private dwelling and do not have a usual place of residence elsewhere in Canada.

² Refers to a person or group of persons who occupy a collective dwelling (i.e. a dwelling of a commercial, institutional or communal nature) and do not have a usual place of residence elsewhere in Canada.

V. CLASSIFICATION

In addition to the basic counts of families, many data products display more detailed information on the characteristics or classification of families and persons in families. For the purpose of illustration, the typical classifications for each source of family data are presented below. Note that the classifications shown are not exhaustive, and that user-defined classifications are, in some cases, possible.

Census

Classification of census families

The Census provides basic counts of census families and economic families. Unless otherwise stated, most of the published data are for census families. Figure 2 on the following page provides an overview of the census family classifications.

Census families are usually further classified by family composition, family type, family structure, and census family household composition.

Census family composition refers to the classification of census families in terms of the number and/or age groups of children at home. The legends that usually appear in data products are as follows:

Families by number of children at home

Total families

- Total families with no children at home
- Total families with children at home
 - 1 child at home
 - 2 children at home
 - 3 children at home
 - 4 children at home
 - 5 children at home
 - 6 children at home
 - 7 children at home
 - 8 or more children at home

Families by age groups of children at home

Total families

- Total families with children at home
 - Total families with
 - all children at home 18 years and over
 - at least one child 18 years or over and at least one child 17 years or under at home
 - all children at home 17 years and under
 - Under 6 years
 - 6 - 14 years
 - 15 - 17 years
 - Under 6 and 6 - 14 years
 - Under 6 and 15 - 17 years
 - 6 - 14 and 15 - 17 years
 - Under 6, 6 - 14 and 15 - 17 years

Census family type refers to the classification of families in terms of whether or not they maintain their own household (i.e., whether the person responsible for household payments - rent, or mortgage, or taxes, or electricity, etc. - is a member of a census family). Under this classification, a family is either a primary family or a secondary family.

Primary family refers to the census family in which a person responsible for household payments is a member.

Secondary family is any census family in which a person responsible for household payments is not a member.

The classification of a family as either a primary or a secondary family depends on the presence of the person responsible for household payments. If this person is a non-family person, or resides elsewhere, no primary family will exist in the household regardless of whether Person 1 (i.e. the first person identified on the Census questionnaire) is a census family member. Accordingly, any census family in such a household will be classified as a secondary census family.

Although data for primary and secondary families are presented in Census products since 1951, the criterion for determining family type was changed in 1981. For more details, see Section VI. Historical Comparability.

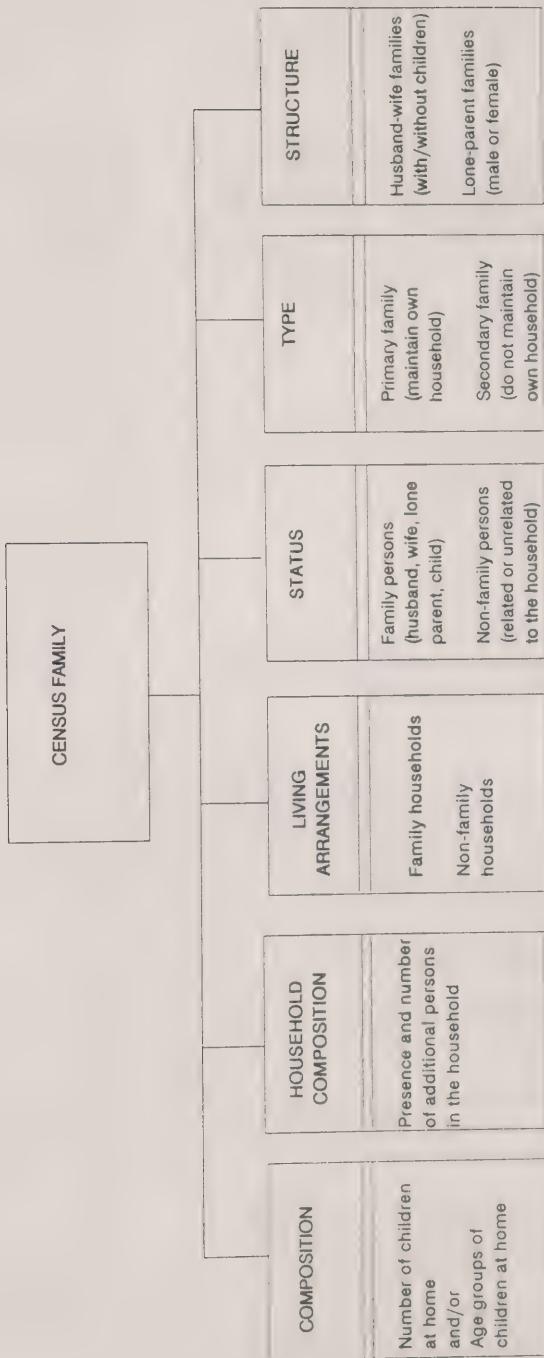
Since families are either primary or secondary families, the legend for census family type is:

- Total census families
 - Primary census families
 - Secondary census families

Census family structure refers to the classification of census families into husband-wife families (with or without children present) and lone-parent families by sex of parent. Note that persons living common-law are considered, for census purposes, as now married, regardless of their legal marital status, and accordingly appear as husband-wife families in most of the published tables. The legend for data on census family structure is:

- Total census families
 - Husband-wife families
 - With no children at home
 - With children at home
 - Lone-parent families
 - Male parent
 - Female parent

Figure 2: Census family classifications



Finally, census family household composition refers to the classification of census families in terms of the presence and number of "additional persons" (i.e., any household members who are not members of the census family being considered).

In some data products, two or three classifications are combined to show more details about families. For example, combining family type and structure would result in the following legend:

Total census families
Primary census families
Husband-wife families
With no children at home
With children at home
Lone-parent families
Male parent
Female parent
Secondary census families
Husband-wife families
With no children at home
With children at home
Lone-parent families
Male parent
Female parent

This classification not only indicates the number of husband-wife and lone-parent families, but also shows how many of these families are maintaining their own households.

It is also possible to add family composition (either the number of children or the age groups of children, or the age of wife or lone-parent, depending on the information desired) to the above classification to display even more details for husband-wife families with children at home and for lone-parent families.

Classification of economic families

Economic families are similarly classified by family structure and by family type.

Economic family structure refers to the classification of economic families into husband-wife economic families and non-husband-wife economic families.

Husband-wife economic families are those in which one of two spouses, either the husband or the wife, is the economic family reference person.

Non-husband-wife economic families are of two kinds: those in which either a male- or female-lone parent is the economic family reference person, or those in which a non-census family person is the

economic family reference person.

Data for economic family structure are available from the 1981 and 1986 censuses only but may be tabulated for the 1971 and 1976 censuses.

Economic family type refers to the classification of economic families in terms of whether or not they maintain their own household (i.e. whether the person responsible for household payments - rent, or mortgage, or taxes, or electricity, etc. - is a member of an economic family).

This classification distinguishes between primary economic families and secondary economic families. As in the case of census family type, the distinction between primary and secondary families rests upon the presence of the reference person who is responsible for household payments.

Thus, a primary economic family is an economic family in which the person responsible for household payments is a member.

A secondary economic family, on the other hand, is an economic family in which the person responsible for household payments is not a member.

Classification of persons in census families

In the simplest terms, everyone is either a member of a census family or not a member of a census family. In Census, the classification of the population into family and non-family persons is called the census family status of individuals (see Figure 3).

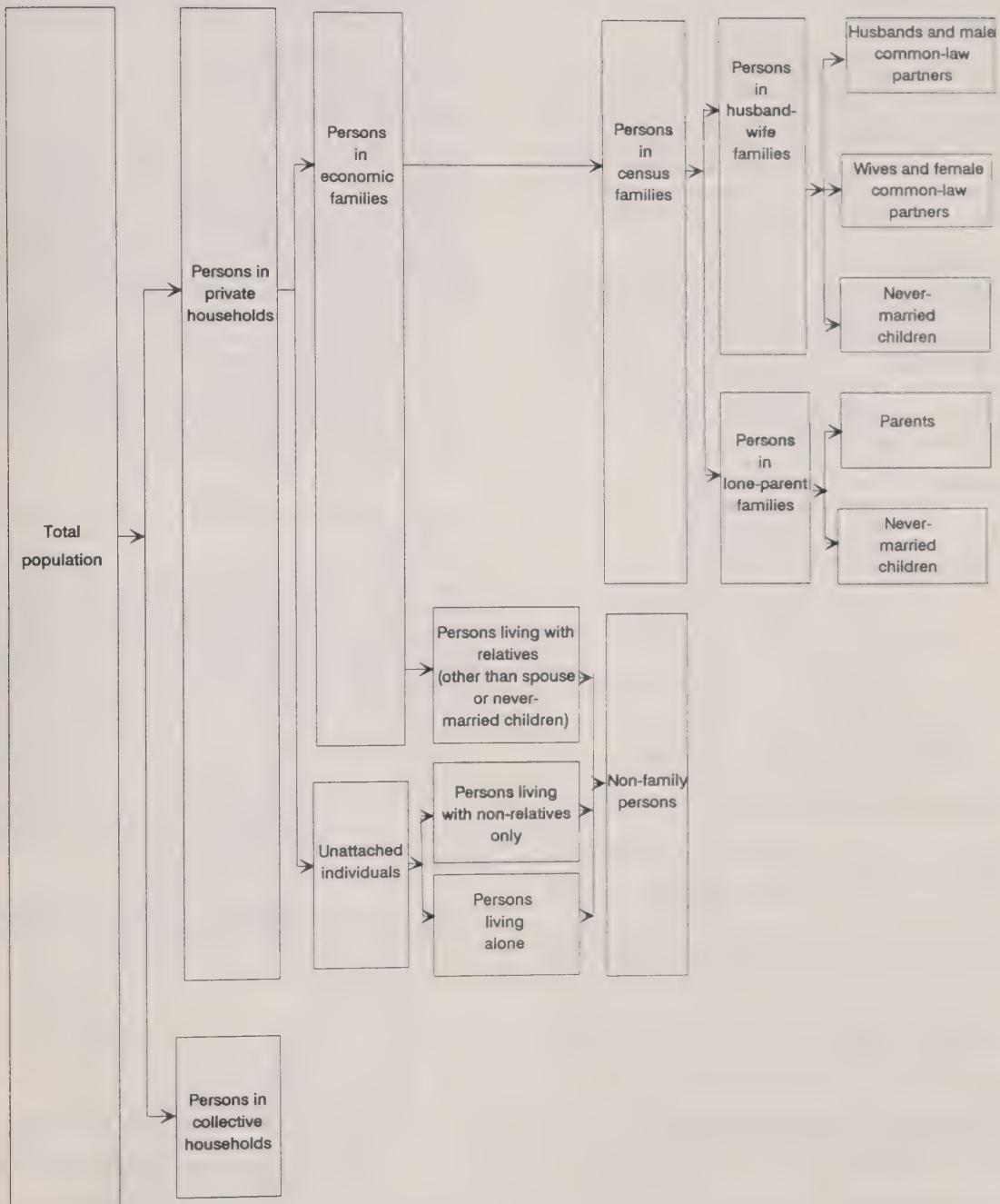
Under this classification, family persons refers to household members who belong to a census/economic family. They, in turn, are further classified as follows:

The terms husband and wife refer to persons living in the same dwelling as their spouse. Persons living common-law are considered, for census purposes, as now married, regardless of their legal marital status, and accordingly, appear as husband-wife families in most of the published tables.

Lone parent refers to a mother or a father, with no spouse present, living in a dwelling with one or more never-married children.

Child refers to sons and daughters (including adopted children and step-children) who have never married, regardless of age, and are living in the same dwelling

Figure 3: Economic and census family membership and family status



as their parent(s). Sons and daughters who have ever been married, regardless of their marital status at enumeration, are not considered as members of their parents' family, even though they are living in the same dwelling.

The term non-family persons refers to household members who do not belong to a census family. They may be related to the household reference person - Person 1 in the 1981 and 1986 censuses, head of household in previous censuses - (e.g., brother-in-law, cousin, grandparent) or unrelated (e.g., lodger, room-mate, employee). A person living alone is always a non-family person.

In the 1981 and 1986 censuses, another classification is designed to provide data on household living arrangements at the population level: census family living arrangements. It refers to the classification of persons in terms of whether they are members of a family household or a non-family household, and whether they are family or non-family persons. In published form, the classification appears as follows:

Total persons in private households
Total persons in family households
Husbands, wives or lone parents
Children in husband-wife families
Children in lone-parent families
Non-family persons
Living with relatives*
Living with non-relatives only**
Total persons in non-family households
Living with relatives*
Living with one or more non-relatives only
Living alone

* May include non-relatives.

** These non-relatives must constitute a census family.

Classification of persons in economic families

Economic family status of individuals is the classification of population in terms of whether or not they are members of an economic family (see Figure 3).

Economic family persons are household members who are members of an economic family.

Unattached individuals are household members who are not members of an economic family. A person living alone is always an unattached individual.

In published form, economic family members may be further classified as follows:

Spouses in husband-wife families

Reference person in non-husband-wife families

Children under 15 years

Married children (of reference person) 15 years and over

Other children (of reference person) 15 years and over

Other relatives (of reference person) 15 years and over

2. Labour Force Survey (LFS)

Classification of families

The main purpose of the Labour Force Survey is to produce estimates on the labour force characteristics of individuals in the Canadian population. The survey also published estimates of families containing at least one unemployed member from July 1960 to October 1972 on quarterly intervals. Monthly estimates were published for the period April 1972 to December 1988. Publication of estimates of the total economic families in the population covered by the Survey started in January 1989. Estimates of families with unemployed persons are no longer published but are available on request. Data on detailed family characteristics of individuals aged 15 years and over are available from 1975 on.

a) Estimates of families with at least one unemployed member

These statistics were provided as one measure of hardship inflicted on the Canadian population by the variation in the unemployment rate. For most of the sixties and up to 1972, these data were published on a quarterly basis and were available monthly after April 1972. The revision to the LFS in 1975 gave more flexibility to the Survey as a vehicle of information on family characteristics of the Canadian population and these statistics were expanded. These statistics are restricted to family units with at least one unemployed person. The data are unique to the LFS and are subject, as any other estimates from the LFS, to sampling variability.

These estimates are classified by family size and number and age group of children. The legend for data display is:

2-3 persons

4-5 persons

6 persons or more

No children

One or more children

At least one child aged 0-5 years

No children aged 0-5 years but at least one child aged 6-15 years

No children under the age of 16 and at least one child aged 16-24 years

b) Estimates of economic families

Beginning in January 1989, the Labour Force Survey publishes estimates of economic families on a monthly basis. Monthly estimates dating back to January 1984 are available upon request. Annual averages at the Canada level are also available in the publication The Labour Force Survey: Annual Averages 1981 to 1988 (Cat. 71-529). These statistics pertain to family units cross-classified by characteristics of individuals in the family. The characteristics of individuals refer to the main labour market characteristics of the reference persons (labelled head or spouse of head) and the family composition (giving priority to the presence of children before the age of the reference persons). In the economic husband-wife family, more detailed information is given on the wife's labour market activity. The legend of family composition is:

All families
 With female head or spouse
 Total
 Husband employed
 Husband unemployed or not in the labour force
 No husband present
 With male head, no spouse present

Each of these groups is broken down by the characteristic "presence of children less than 16 years". When there are no children less than 16 years present, the economic families are divided into two groups according to the age of the wife in the husband-wife families and the age of the reference person (head) in the other families. The legend reads as follows:

All families
 Total
 With children less than 16 years
 With pre-school age children
 With children less than 3 years
 With youngest child 3-5 years
 Without pre-school age children but at least one 6-15 years
 Without children less than 16 years
 Head or spouse less than 55 years
 Head or spouse 55 years and over
 With female head or spouse
 Total
 With children less than 16 years
 With pre-school age children
 With children less than 3 years
 With youngest child 3-5 years
 Without pre-school age children but at least one 6-15 years
 Without children less than 16 years
 Head or spouse less than 55 years
 Head or spouse 55 years and over

Husband employed
Total
With children less than 16 years
With pre-school age children
With children less than 3 years
With youngest child 3-5 years
Without pre-school age children but at least one 6-15 years
Without children less than 16 years
Head or spouse less than 55 years
Head or spouse 55 years and over
Husband unemployed or not in the labour force
Total
With children less than 16 years
With pre-school age children
With children less than 3 years
With youngest child 3-5 years
Without pre-school age children but at least one 6-15 years
Without children less than 16 years
Head or spouse less than 55 years
Head or spouse 55 years and over
No husband present
Total
With children less than 16 years
With pre-school age children
With children less than 3 years
With youngest child 3-5 years
Without pre-school age children but at least one 6-15 years
Without children less than 16 years
Head or spouse less than 55 years
Head or spouse 55 years and over
With male head, no spouse present
Total
With children less than 16 years
With pre-school age children
With children less than 3 years
With youngest child 3-5 years
Without pre-school age children but at least one 6-15 years
Without children less than 16 years
Head or spouse less than 55 years
Head or spouse 55 years and over

Classification of individuals

Heads or spouses of heads are:

- both the husband and the wife in families whose only members are a married couple and their unmarried children, if any;
- the lone parent in families whose only members are one parent and his or her unmarried children;
- the person designated by the respondent as "head" of the family in families composed of persons having no parent-child relationship (for example, brothers or sisters, cousins, etc.).

For the purposes of the Labour Force Survey, persons living in common-law arrangements are considered married and thus constitute a family.

Children refer to unmarried sons and daughters (natural or adopted) of the head of the family.

Other family members consist of persons 15 years of age and over who are not identified as the head or spouse of head. They are usually sons and daughters of the head, but they may also be brothers or sisters, parents, or other relatives of the head.

Unattached individuals are persons 15 years of age and over who live alone in a household or live with persons unrelated to them.

Survey of Consumer Finances

Classification of families

Family characteristics

The term "family characteristics" used in the publication Income Distributions by Size in Canada (Cat. 13-207) refers to the classification of economic families according to family composition. The categories and sub-categories are as follows:

Husband-wife families

- Married couple only
- Married couple with single children only
- Married couple with relatives other than children only
- All other husband-wife families

Lone-parent families

- All other types of families

Note that "all other husband-wife families" are families that consist of a married couple, married children and their families with or without single children or other relatives.

"All other types of families" include families consisting of two or more related adults such as brothers and sisters.

A second set of selected "family characteristics" has appeared in text tables of Catalogue 13-207 since 1984, presenting average income and low income statistics. The categories and sub-categories are as follows:

Elderly families
Married couples only
Non-elderly families
Married couples only
One earner
Two earners
Two-parent families with children
One earner
Two earners
Three or more earners
Married couples with other relatives
Female lone-parent families
No earner
One earner
All other families

Family life cycle

This classification of families is similar to "family characteristics" in that it also groups families in two major categories: husband-wife families and other families. However, in this classification, husband-wife families are further broken down by the age of the head (under 45 years; 45 years and over) and the presence or absence of children under 16. The legend is as follows:

Husband-wife families

- Head under 45 years
 - With children under 16 years
 - Without children under 16 years
- Head 45 years and over
 - With children under 16 years
 - Without children under 16 years

All other types of families

Variables frequently used in cross-classifications

Family size refers to the total number of persons in the family as constituted at the time of the survey, including adults and children of any age.

Number of children in the tabulations refers to the count of the number of children under 6, 16 or 18 years of age.

Classification of individuals

Head of family is determined in the following manner:

- (i) in families consisting of married couples with or without children, the husband is considered the head;
- (ii) in lone-parent families with unmarried children, the parent is the head;
- (iii) in lone-parent families with married children, the member who is mainly responsible for the maintenance of the family becomes the head; and

(iv) in families where relationships are other than husband-wife or parent-child, normally the eldest in the family is considered the head.

Children refer to natural and adopted sons and daughters of the head of family.

An unattached individual is a person living alone or in a household where he/she is not related to other household members.

Survey of Family Expenditures

Classification of families

It is important to recall that the term "spending unit" is technically more precise than the term "family" in the Family Expenditure Survey. A spending unit is a group of persons dependent on a common or pooled income for the major items of expense and living in the same dwelling or one financially independent individual living alone. It is possible for two or more unrelated persons to comprise one spending unit.

For the purpose of data presentation, spending units are often grouped into three major categories: (1) unattached individuals, (2) married-couple families, with or without never-married children, but no other persons, and (3) other families.

Married-couple families include husband-wife families and common-law unions.

Other families include married couples with relatives other than unmarried children, lone-parent families and other families of relatives or non-relatives.

Another classification used for data presentation is family type, which defines the family in terms of the number of adults and children.

Classification of individuals

Unattached individuals are persons who do not share major items of expenditure with anyone, including persons living alone and boarders. From the point of view of the spending unit, unattached individuals are financially independent persons.

The identification of family head has undergone some changes.

Among husband-wife families, the husband was considered the family head for the 1974 and earlier surveys. In

the surveys of 1976 and 1978, either the husband or the wife could have been considered family head, depending on who was mainly responsible for the maintenance of the family. From 1982 onwards, the term "reference person" was used on the questionnaire instead of the term "head". Again, the reference person was the person mainly responsible for the maintenance of the family. In the publications, "head" is used generally to denote the reference person; but in families where the reference person's income was low and spouse's a lot higher, the spouse was designated as head.

In one-parent families with unmarried sons and daughters, the parent was considered the head for the 1976 and earlier surveys. From 1978 onwards, the family head was the person mainly responsible for maintenance. In 1982, head was replaced by reference person in data collection. Family head is, in recent surveys, the husband or the wife in husband-wife families. In earlier surveys, the husband was considered the family head. In one-parent families with unmarried sons and daughters, the parent is considered the head. In all other types of spending units, the head is the person mainly responsible for the maintenance of the spending unit.

Family Food Expenditure Survey

Employs essentially the same classification as the Family Expenditure Survey.

Household and family projections

Classification of families

Same definitions as Census. The classification that appears in the publication is as follows:

All families
Husband-wife
Lone-parent
Male parent
Female parent

Postcensal estimates of families

Classification of families

Family structure

Census families are classified into husband-wife families and lone-parent families. The presentation of data combines family structure and age group of children as follows:

Husband-wife families

With no children

With children

All children aged 18+

Children aged 18+
and at least one under 18 years

All children under 18 years

All children under 6 years
All children 6-14 years
All children 15-17 years
Children under 6 years and 6-14 years
Children under 6 years and 15-17 years
Children 6-14 years and 15-17 years
Children under 6, 6-14, and 15-17 years

Lone-parent families

With children

All children aged 18+

Children aged 18+
and at least one under 18 years

All children under 18 years

All children under 6 years
All children 6-14 years
All children 15-17 years
Children under 6 years and 6-14 years
Children under 6 years and 15-17 years
Children 6-14 years and 15-17 years
Children under 6, 6-14, and 15-17 years

Total families

With no children

With children

All children aged 18+

Children aged 18+
and at least one under 18 years

All children under 18 years

All children under 6 years
All children 6-14 years
All children 15-17 years
Children under 6 years and 6-14 years
Children under 6 years and 15-17 years
Children 6-14 years and 15-17 years
Children under 6, 6-14, and 15-17 years

VI. HISTORICAL COMPARABILITY (1951-1986)

Census

Definition and counts of census families

The definition of census family has remained unchanged since 1971. However, the universe of family data has changed since 1976. Family statistics in the data products from 1976 on are for those families in private households enumerated in Canada only. In previous censuses, the counts of families included families in collective households and households outside Canada. Consequently, family data from the 1976, 1981 and 1986 censuses are not completely comparable with those of earlier years.

Classification of families

Census family type

Since the 1951 Census, families have been classified in terms of whether or not they maintain their own household. If the head of the family is also the head of the household, the family is classified as one that maintains their own household (or primary family). Families not maintaining their own household (or secondary families) are further classified as to whether the family head is a relative of the household head or not. This classification has appeared in census publications since 1951. In published data from the 1981 and 1986 censuses, secondary families are not disaggregated into related and not related categories.

Note that until 1976, the criteria used to determine the head of household were as follows: (1) when husband and wife or parents and never-married children were living in the same dwelling, the husband was reported as "head", and the parent rather than a never-married child; (2) when brothers and sisters comprised a household, usually the eldest was reported as "head"; (3) when a household consisted of several unrelated persons who shared housekeeping facilities, one of them was arbitrarily chosen as "head"; (4) in hotel and institutional households, the officer in charge, provided he fulfilled the residence requirements was "head", and (5) if the household consisted entirely of guests, lodgers, patients, or inmates, one was designated arbitrarily as "head". With respect to family data, the first criterion was the most important since it applied to the majority of families in Canada.

In the 1976 Census, the definition of head was changed to: either the husband or the wife; the parent where there is one parent only, with one or more children (who have

never married, regardless of age); or any member of a group sharing a dwelling equally. However, data for family type were still published in terms of primary and secondary families as indicated above.

In the 1981 and 1986 censuses, the criterion for determining family type was changed. The term "Person 1" replaced the previously used concept of household head as the household reference person. Person 1 was selected as follows:

(1) either the husband or the wife in any married couple living in the dwelling; (2) either partner in a common-law relationship; (3) the parent, where one parent only lived with his or her never-married son(s) or daughter(s) of any age; (4) if none of the above applied, any adult member of the household.

At the same time, a new question was added to the census questionnaire to determine a person, or one of the persons, in the household who is responsible for paying the rent, or mortgage, or taxes, or electricity. The presence and family status of this person constituted the criteria for identifying primary and secondary families.

A primary family in the 1981 and 1986 censuses refers to the census family in which a person responsible for household payments is a member. A secondary family is any census family in which a person responsible for household payments is not a member. Note that if the person identified as responsible for the household payments is a non-family person, or resides elsewhere, no primary family will exist in the household regardless of whether Person 1 is a census family member. Accordingly, any census family in such a household will be classified as a secondary census family.

It is not possible to evaluate the full effects of this change on the historical comparability of the counts of primary and secondary families.

Census family structure

The classification of families as husband-wife families (with or without children) and as lone-parent families has remained unchanged since 1951.

As of 1976, the terms "family status" and "one-parent families" have been replaced by the terms "family structure" and "lone-parent families".

The term "family head" in the 1971 Census has been deleted in subsequent censuses.

Economic family

Limited data on economic families have been published since the 1971 Census. Such data are historically comparable.

Classification of persons

Census family status

As the definitions and criteria for determining the family status of individuals have remained constant, data for husbands, wives and lone-parents are comparable from 1951 to 1971. As of 1976, families and family persons in collective households and households outside Canada are excluded from the family data universe.

The historical data for children are not strictly comparable. In the 1951, 1956, 1961 and 1966 censuses, most of the tables showing children in families or families classified according to the number of children included only children under 25 years of age, although by definition children are never-married sons and daughters, regardless of age, of the family head. However, limited data are available from these censuses which included children 25 years and over. Users of historical census data on children and/or families by number of children at home should exercise caution in identifying the inclusion (or exclusion, as the case may be) of children 25 years and over in the tabulated counts.

Another change that should be taken into account in using historical data on children is that prior to the 1976 Census, guardianship children (such as grandchildren, nephews and nieces of the family head) or wards under 21 years for whom no pay was received were treated as own children. As of 1976, grandchildren, nephews and nieces were categorized according to their actual relationship to the household reference person. They appear in the published tables as non-family persons if one or both of their parents were not present in the same household. Foster children and wards are to be counted as lodgers and appear as non-family persons in the tables.

Economic family status

As of the 1971 Census, definitions and counts of economic family persons and unattached individuals are comparable. Data are not available from previous censuses.

The Labour Force Survey

The Labour Force Survey was carried out at quarterly

intervals until 1952, and monthly thereafter. There was no reference to estimates of families until July 1960.

Definition of families

The Labour Force Survey has employed the concept of economic families since July 1960.

Classification of families

No change has been made in the classification of families, and the data are historically comparable.

Survey of Consumer Finances

Prior to 1972, surveys were conducted at biennial intervals. Since 1972, the survey has been taken annually. The survey sample has always been selected from the Labour Force Survey sample frame, either two-thirds of the Labour Force Survey sample (large sample years) or independent samples from the frame (small sample years).

Definition and concept

The survey has used the same definition of economic family since the 1950s. The definition and data processing requirements for deriving census families are historically comparable.

Classification of families and individuals

In 1951, "individuals" were included in the published estimates as "single person family units". This practice has been discontinued, and "individuals", if living alone or unrelated to anyone else in the household, are referred to as unattached individuals in the data products. Otherwise, the classification of families is historically comparable.

Survey of Family Expenditures and Family Food Expenditure Survey

The continuing series of surveys were initiated in 1953. Until 1959, the surveys were primarily concerned with

TABLE 1. Survey criteria and sample size of urban family expenditure surveys, 1953, 1955, 1957, 1959, 1962 and 1964

Survey year	Survey criteria			
	Family composition	Family income	Geographic	Sample size
1953	2A,3A,4A,2A/1C,2A/2C, 2A/3C,2A/4C,3A/1C. ¹	1,800-6,500	Halifax, Montréal, Toronto, Winnipeg, Vancouver.	969
1955	Same as 1953.	2,000-6,500	Halifax, Montréal, Toronto, Kitchener-Waterloo,Winnipeg, Edmonton, Vancouver.	787
1957	Same as 1955 and 1953.	2,500-7,000	St. John's, Halifax, Montréal, Trois-Rivières, Toronto, Kitchener-Waterloo, Winnipeg, Edmonton, Vancouver.	1,088
1959	All families and individuals.	no restrictions	60 urban centres of 15,000 and over.	1,960
1962	Families of two to six persons, including at least two adults.	3,000-8,000	St. John's, Halifax, Montréal, Toronto, Winnipeg, Edmonton, Vancouver.	1,070
1964	All families and individuals.	no restrictions	St. John's, Halifax, Quebec, Montréal, Toronto, Ottawa, Winnipeg, Regina, Saskatoon, Edmonton, Vancouver.	2,034

¹ A- Adult,
C- Child(ren).

obtaining information on spending patterns of a group of urban middle-income families of specified composition known as the Consumer Price Index "target group". The survey criteria and sample size of the surveys of 1953, 1955, 1957, 1959, 1962 and 1964 are summarized in the preceding table, reproduced from Catalogue 62-527.

As can be seen, the scope of the surveys broadened in 1959 and 1964 in sample size and in geographic coverage.

In subsequent surveys, no eligibility criteria of income or family composition were applied. However, spending units who were families of official representatives of foreign countries living in Canada were excluded from the surveys, as were families (or individuals) living full-time in institutions.

Definition and concepts

The definition of family in these surveys has always been based upon the concept of the spending unit. Thus, the data are historically comparable except for the selection criteria based upon family composition and income outlined previously.

Classification of families and individuals

The classification of spending units in terms of family composition (i.e. the number of adults and children in the spending unit) has been comparable. The same can be said of the data for married-couple families by number of children.

VII. FREQUENCY AND GEOGRAPHIC AVAILABILITY OF DATA

Census

Frequency: 1951, 1956, 1961, 1966, 1971, 1976, 1981, 1986

Geography: Canada, provinces and the territories urban size groups, rural, census metropolitan areas, census divisions, census subdivisions, census tracts, federal electoral districts, census agglomerations, enumeration areas.

Labour Force Survey

Frequency: Estimates of families with at least one unemployed member were published on a quarterly basis up to 1972, and monthly after April 1972.

Monthly estimates of economic families (as of January 1984) were published in January 1989.

Annual averages at the Canada level are published in The Labour Force: Annual Averages 1981 to 1988 (Cat. 71-529).

Geography: Canada, provinces, census metropolitan areas, metropolitan areas, economic regions.

Survey of Consumer Finances

Frequency: Biennial from 1951 to 1969; annual since 1971.

Geography: From 1951 to 1965 data are for non-farm families only. Since then, data for all private households have been published for Canada, provinces and size of area of residence.

Family Expenditure Survey and Family Food Expenditure Survey

Frequency: Biennial from 1953-59, then in approximately biennial intervals from 1962 to 1986.

Geography: Canada and selected major urban centres for most years, data for urban size groups and rural areas available occasionally.

APPENDIX A

Family Expenditure Surveys

Catalogue Number	Occasional <u>Earlier publications</u>		62-530 <u>Urban Family Expenditure, 1967</u> , 160 pages.
62-509	City Family Expenditure, 1953		
62-510	City Family Expenditure, 1955		
62-517	City Family Expenditure, 1957		
62-521	Urban Family Expenditure, 1959		
62-511	Urban Family Food Expenditure, 1953		
62-512	Urban Family Food Expenditure, 1955		
62-516	Urban Family Food Expenditure, 1957		
62-520	Urban Family Food Expenditure 1959		
62-524	<u>Urban Family Food Expenditure, 1962</u> , Bilingual, 79 pages.		
	Results from a series of monthly surveys of family food expenditure conducted in seven cities throughout 1962 and referring to families of specified types in the size range two to six persons, with incomes ranging from \$3,000 to \$7,500. Statistics are in the form of average dollar expenditures per family and per person and percentage of families reporting for about 150 food items. Additional material is included concerning attributes of survey families, response and reliability of survey results. \$0.75		
62-525	<u>Urban Family Expenditure, 1962</u> , 126 pages.		
	The fifth in a series of small sample surveys of family expenditure in major urban centres. Expenditure patterns by family characteristics for 1,070 families of two to six persons with family incomes ranging from \$3,000 to \$8,000 in seven cities. Detailed expenditure for families classified by city, income level, family type and age of head. \$1.50		
62-527	<u>Urban Family Expenditure, 1964</u> , 140 pages.		
	The sixth in a series of small sample surveys of family expenditure in major urban centres. Expenditure patterns by family characteristics for 2,034 families and unattached individuals in eleven cities. Detailed expenditure for families and unattached individuals, classified by city, income level, family type and age of head. \$1.50		
			62-530 <u>Urban Family Expenditure, 1967</u> , 160 pages.
			The seventh in a series of small sample surveys of family expenditure in major urban centres. Expenditure patterns by family characteristics for 2,096 families and unattached individuals in eleven cities. Detailed expenditure for families and unattached individuals, classified by city, income level, family type and age of head. \$1.50
			62-531 <u>Family Food Expenditure in Canada, 1969</u> , Volume I. Bilingual, 208 pages.
			Detailed information on family food purchases recorded by a sample of 10,022 Canadian families and individuals in 1969. Average expenditures and quantities per family and per person are presented by commodity for Canada and five regions (Atlantic, Quebec, Ontario, Prairies and British Columbia), cross-classified according to location in urban centres of 30,000 and over, smaller urban centres, rural areas and for Canada rural non-farm and farm. \$2.00
			62-532 <u>Family Food Expenditure in Canada, 1969</u> , Volume II. Bilingual, 127 pages.
			Shows tables of patterns of expenditure and summaries of expenditure for main commodity groups for Canada as a whole and for five regions (Atlantic, Quebec, Ontario, Prairies and British Columbia) chiefly for the non-farm population cross-classified by various family characteristics such as family type, family income, family life cycle. \$1.50
			62-535E <u>Family Food Expenditure in Canada, 1969</u> , Volume I - "All Canada: Urban and Rural", English and French, 199 pages.
			Shows patterns of expenditure for Canada as a whole by selected characteristics such as urbanization size class, family type, family life cycle, family income, age of head, tenure, occupation of head, education of head, country of origin and immigrant arrival year. These are mainly shown separately for urban and rural areas.

62-536E Family Food Expenditure in Canada, 1969
Volume II - "Regions", English and French,
261 pages.

Shows patterns of expenditure for each of five broad regions of Canada: Atlantic Provinces, Quebec, Ontario, Prairie Provinces and British Columbia. Each region is shown for selected characteristics such as urbanization size, family type, family life cycle, family income, age of head and tenure. Although separate tabulations for the smaller provinces are not generally available for these characteristics, two sets of tables by province are given in this volume; they are, respectively, by family income quintile and by an abbreviated family type.

62-538E Family Food Expenditure in Canada, 1969
Volume IV - "The Analysis of Family Expenditure", English and French

Covers the conventional analytical discussion of the tabulations and of the discernible relationships between family expenditures and characteristics of the family identified in the study. These relationships are illustrated by tables, charts and multiple regression equations. The discussion also includes a study of non-response and sampling errors.

62-537E Family Food Expenditure in Canada, 1969
Volume III - "Major Urban Centres", English
and French.

Shows patterns of expenditure for the same eleven major regional cities covered in "Urban Family Expenditure, 1967", classified mainly by the same family characteristics as in Volume II.

APPENDIX B

Technical notes on the differences in
classifying children in the Census and the
Survey of Consumer Finances

Family definition

Refers to (1) a husband and a wife¹ (with or without children who have never married, regardless of age), (2) a lone parent of any marital status, with one or more children who have never married, regardless of age, living in the same dwelling.

Family definition

Consists of either a husband and wife¹ (with or without children who have never married) or a parent with one or more children who have never married, living together in the same dwelling. Unmarried children, regardless of their age, living with their parent(s) are considered a part of the family, i.e., a census family includes adult children as long as they are not married, separated, divorced or widowed.

Children

Sons and daughters

Refer to sons and daughters (including adopted children and step-children) who have never married, regardless of age and are living in the same dwelling as their parent(s).

Children

Sons and daughters

Adopted children and step-children (regardless of age) are treated as sons and daughters as long as never-married and living in the same household.

Other relatives

Foster children are treated as children in the families if under 18 and never-married.

Single (never-married) grandchildren under 21 years of age (with no parents or children present) will form a census family with their grandparents.

If aged 21 or over (or if ever-married) will form a separate family or a person not in family (PNIF). These procedures are similar to the 1971 Census.

Brothers or sisters that are never-married and aged less than 15 years will form a family with the head's family (if the parent is not present). If 15 or over they are PNIF's.

Comments

As of the 1976 Census, unrelated wards, foster and guardianship children, whether or not pay is received, are classified as lodgers.

Comments

Guardianship or wards of any age or foster children 18 years or over are coded as a separate economic family or as unattached individuals on the Labour Force Survey (LFS). Therefore their status cannot be distinguished when forming census families for the Survey of Consumer Finances (SCF).

Family formation - processing

Four variables are essential to form families. These are:

Operational aspects of the formation

Data for the SCF is collected during the April LFS by personal interview. The coding of the economic families is done on Form 3 when the household is being interviewed for the first time and checked for possible changes

¹ Persons living in a common-law arrangement are considered as married regardless of their legal marital status; they accordingly appear as a husband-wife family.

(1) relationship to person 1, (2) date of birth (age), (3) sex and (4) marital status. These four variables are analyzed together to check if they are free from pre-determined conflicts during edit and imputation. An example of pre-determined conflict is when Person 1's spouse has the same sex as Person 1 or the answer box has been left blank. Conflicting fields are erased and imputation based on the principle of minimum change will take place to rectify the conflicts(s). After these four variables are edited together and are conflict free, family formation will take place.

During family formation, the four above-mentioned variables as well as the order of listing of persons on the questionnaire(s) will be considered. In general, persons in each household are classified into one of the ten strata in which decision rules are used to form families. The ten strata are ways to sort out the households according to the relationships to Person 1 and facilitate family formation.

in subsequent months. The creation of SCF census families is effected through both automatic and manual operations from the economic family information which is based on the following variables: economic family unit, economic family relationship, marital status and age.

The LFS codes individuals on an economic family basis using the following codes:

Code 1 Head of family
Code 2 Spouse
Code 3 Son or daughter (natural, step or adopted)
Code 4 Grandchild
Code 5 Son-in-law or daughter-in-law
Code 6 Foster child (age < 18)
Code 7 Parent
Code 8 Parent-in-law
Code 9 Brother or sister
Code 0 Other relative

From these codes, the SCF forms census families for which the following codes are used:

Code 1 Head
Code 2 Spouse
Code 3 Son/Daughter
Code 0 Other relative and foster child

